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SUBJ: LETTER FROM JUSTICE COMMANDOS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
REF: (A) ZURICH 0004, (B) 82 ZURICH 1286

1. DANISH CONSUL BJORN SUHR SAID JANUARY 10 THAT HAVING SPOKEN
TO HIS CONSULAR COLLEAGUES, HE IS SATISFIED ALL CAREER CONSULS
GENERAL IN ZURICH RECEIVED THE SAME ARMENIAN TERRORIST LETTER.
HE ALSO IS SURE THAT NO HONORARY CONSULS GENERAL HAD GOTTEN
THESE LETTERS.

2. SUHR GURMISED THAT THE SOURCE OF THE ADDRESSES USED FOR
THE LETTERS WAS MORE THAN TWO YEARS OLD SINCE THE LETTER TO HIM
CARRIED AN ADDRESS NOT VALID SINCE 1980.
BRAINARD

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.M. Crane DATE 4/20/85

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ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Central Office:

212 STUART STREET, BOSTON, MASS. 02116 • TEL. (617) 426-9842

January 25, 1983

TO: Honorable George P. Shultz, Secretary of State

FROM: Armenian National Committee
Eastern United States

SUBJECT: State Department Denial of Genocide

As an American branch of the major political organization among Armenians in the Diaspora, we are writing to seek corrective action on a matter of grave importance to the nearly one million Americans of Armenian background, to the seven million Armenians world-wide, and potentially to millions of other Americans and to other governments and their citizens.

The problem concerns our State Department taking a position which not only appears to deny an almost universally-accepted historic fact but also seems to condone genocide by joining the perpetrators in covering up the crime. Such an indefensible and insensitive position can only harm the United States' image and position. We are referring specifically to this "Note" which appears at the end of a report by Andrew Corsun on "Armenian Terrorism", in the August, 1982 issue of the State Department Bulletin:

"Because the historical record of the 1915 events in Asia Minor is ambiguous, the Department of State does not endorse allegations that the Turkish Government committed a genocide against the Armenian people. Armenian terrorists use this allegation to justify in part their continuing attacks on Turkish diplomats and installations."
(underlining added)

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To label the genocide of the Armenians an "allegation" is as shocking and irresponsible as claiming that the earth is flat, or more appropriately, that the Holocaust of the Jews is a myth.

If the Armenian Genocide, probably one of the most extensively documented occurrences in modern history, is an "allegation", the Department of State might presumably also deny the realities of Black slavery in America, the internment of the Japanese-Americans during World War II and other such events.

Before proceeding, we should point out that the apparent delay in our writing to you is that the Armenian National Committee (ANC) has been involved in direct discussion on this matter with Mr. Michael Cotter and other State Department officers. We had expected that something so clearly wrong would not have gone uncorrected so long. Now we must follow up our earlier contacts (and letters) with this formal memorandum.

Secretary Shultz, you know, as we do, that there is nothing "ambiguous" about the "historical record of the 1915 events in Asia Minor" and that, except for the Turkish Government and a very small handful of their apologists or paid propagandists, no responsible person and certainly no expert on genocide or on that period of history has any doubts about what happened in 1915. Does the denial of the Nazi Holocaust by a few anti-Semites render the historical record "ambiguous"? Of course not. In this case, politically-motivated or psychopathic denials must not be confused with the "historical record". The fact that the massacres occurred and that the Turkish Government's plan was one of Genocide is more than adequately documented and is

universally-acknowledged (except for the Turks). The intent of the Turkish Government to destroy the Armenian people is attested to by orders that have been preserved, as well as the observations and records of prominent European and American individuals and agencies, including our own (U.S.) Ambassador to Turkey (1913-1916), Henry Morgenthau, and the U.S. Consular officials who reported to him. Indeed, the national Archives of the United States, including the general records of the State Department, include extensive documentation of the nature and scope of the Turkish crime against the Armenian people. The bibliography, The Armenian Holocaust by Richard Hovannisian, (NAASR, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978) devotes several pages to a listing of numerous files of the State Department from that period containing literally thousands of documents dealing with the horrible events of 1915, and the years that preceded and followed it.

Distinct from the total indefensibility of the statement as a denial of reality is the fact that it also runs counter to decades of American policy as voiced in the statements and actions of Presidents and of Congress. Even within the past decade, American Presidents, including both Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, have recognized the fact of the Armenian Genocide and commented on it in rather strong and clear words, and there have been many instances of official and quasi-official recognition of the historical reality and significance of the Armenian genocide.

In a statement issued to our organization on October 22, 1976, Jimmy Carter said:

"The history of Armenia, extending over 3,000 years, is one of survival against overwhelming odds, victory over oppressors, and tragic human suffering."

"The Armenian people have consistently demonstrated an indomitable spirit and a dedication to the cause of freedom, as exemplified by the creation of a Republic following the 1915-1917 bloodbath."

"An estimated one and a half million persons were murdered during the first genocide of the 20th century, yet even though the tragedy of history has not been corrected, Armenians, wherever they are, continue to maintain their culture and strong desire for freedom."

Just the year before (1975), the U.S. House of Representatives adopted HJR 143 designating April 24, 1975, a "National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man", to remember "all the victims of genocide, especially those of Armenian ancestry who succumbed to the genocide perpetrated in 1915".

In encouraging the adoption of HJR 148, House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill co-signed a February 21, 1975 letter to all members of Congress which stated:

"We must not allow the 1915 atrocities to be relegated to oblivion because there is no Armenia in the United Nations to represent the Armenian people. There is ample historical evidence of the deliberate attempt to exterminate the Armenian Nation which cannot and should not be ignored."

Speaker O'Neill used virtually the same words in a statement issued earlier to the Armenian Youth Federation.

On May 11, 1976 and August 30, 1976, the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy Research and Development, of the U.S. House

"Their only crime was their century-old dedication to live their lives as free Armenians, professing their Christian beliefs, in a homeland that had previously dazzled Asia Minor with its prominence and power."

"The 1980's must be that period when the voices of Americans of Armenian ancestry are heard in the councils of government. It must be that period when Americans and its allies throughout the Free World resolve that the tragedy of 1915 never again be repeated."

"I join with the American Armenian community in solemn remembrance of the martyrs of 1915."

Since some might be inclined to dismiss the Reagan or Carter statements as campaign rhetoric, it is worth noting that, even after his election, President Reagan has acknowledged the Armenian Genocide. For instance in Proclamation 4838, issued on April 22, 1981, to proclaim April 26 - May 3 as "Days of Remembrance of Victims of Holocaust", in which the precedential significance of the Armenian Genocide is clearly indicated by our President:

"Like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it and like too many other such persecutions of too many other peoples - the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten."

The same was true of President Carter. For instance, the Public Papers of the Presidents: Jimmy Carter, Vol. I (1978), records the following remarks by President Carter at a May 16, 1978, White House reception honoring Armenian-American business, industry, labor, education, civil and religious leaders:

"But it's generally not known in the world that in the years preceding 1916, there was a concerted effort made to eliminate all the Armenian people, probably one of the greatest tragedies that ever befell any group. And there weren't any Nuremberg Trials."

"Well I feel very deeply that I, as President, ought to make sure that this is never forgotten. . ."

On Armenian Memorial Day, April 24, 1980, U.S. Holocaust Council Director Monroe H. Freedman, spoke in New York and in a subsequently distributed statement said, "Today, we recall in sorrow the million and a half Armenians who were tortured, starved and butchered to death in the first genocide of the twentieth century."

The 1980 edition of the semi-official Area Handbook on Turkey, prepared by American University (Foreign Area Studies) and published by and for the U.S. Department of the Army, is quite clear when it states that the Ottoman Government in 1915-16 "undertook to exterminate or forcefully remove the entire Armenian population in the area." Elsewhere in the same book, these experts on Turkey describe the "massive deportation of as many as two million Armenians" undertaken in 1915 and how "it shortly degenerated into a massacre." As to numbers killed, the Area Handbook says, "The most conservative estimates put the number of dead at 500,000, but other sources cite a figure well over one million."

Going back some 60 years, the official American Military Mission to Armenia, headed by Major General John G. Harbord, reported these findings to the U.S. Senate on April 13, 1920.

"Massacres and deportations were organized in the Spring of 1915 under definite system, the soldiers going from town to town."

"The dead from this wholesale attempt on the race are variously estimated from 500,000 to more than a million . . ."

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"Mutilation, violation, torture, and death has left their haunting memories in a hundred beautiful Armenian valleys, and the traveler in that region is seldom free from the evidence of this most colossal crime of all the ages."

"Testimony is universal that the massacres have always been ordered from Constantinople."

We have, of course, no doubt that you and the Department are fully aware of the horrors that the Armenian people suffered in 1915-20 or that these unprecedented crimes were the result of a Turkish government policy of genocide designed to "solve the Armenian Problem" by eliminating the Armenians.

We suspect and fear that whoever is responsible for the Department's seeming cover-up of this century's first genocide may have acted out of a misguided effort to placate Turkey's military junta for strategic (basically military) reasons. We are, however, not convinced that officials at your level are fully aware of this "policy" or, if so, have thought through its moral and political implications and potential repercussions. Moreover, as Americans, we feel a sense of shame at such an apparent subversion of the truth by our own government and feel compelled to help you retrieve America's honor by somehow correcting this grave error.

It should be understood that, in our view, the seriousness of the Department's statement does not derive only from the inexcusable denial of a historic fact, but from its current effect of supporting and aiding the ongoing process of planned genocide.

Indeed, to us and informed observers, the Armenian Genocide is not just history but a continuous process which began in 1915 with the systematic mass killing (themselves the culmination of decades of rule-by-massacre), continued through the Kemalist assaults and massacres (including the destruction of the independent Armenian Republic), the dispersal of the survivors so that Turkish-occupied Armenia was left with virtually no Armenians (part of the racist geo-political "pan-Turkish" design), then the still-continuing destruction or misrepresentation of Armenian architectural monuments and the Turkification of place-names (all to destroy any vestige of an Armenian presence), and now to cover-up and denial. This most recent phase, which has intensified in the early 1960's, involves an active harassment and propaganda campaign designed to intimidate Armenians from publicly commemorating their martyrs and to pressure governments and others to either join in or tolerate Turkey's pathological cover-up that alternately denies that any massacre occurred or that it was a "planned" genocide, at times even claims Armenians massacred Turks (even "two million" has been claimed), or sometimes asserts Armenians never lived in "Eastern Turkey" or that Armenians never even existed! This cover-up, this denial of the existence of the crime or even of its victims, is unquestionably part of the final phase in the continuing Turkish crime against the Armenian people, and the U.S. State Department has (we hope unwittingly) become an accomplice in this continuing genocidal plan by assisting in the cover-up. Every time someone, especially the U.S. State

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Department, refers to the Armenian Genocide as an "allegation" or a "claim" or even a "controversy". Turkey's diabolical scheme to bury, re-write or raise doubts about the truth, and thereby evade responsibility, is given undeserved credibility.

As Americans, we also find it frightening to contemplate the possibility that the Turks and even some of the more "cooperative" U.S. officials may in fact be attempting to provoke violent reactions to discredit the Armenian Cause. More specifically, we are particularly concerned that the "Note" denying the genocide on behalf of the Department may be part of an effort to deliberately provoke extremists into retaliating against American diplomats, thereby turning American public and legislative opinion against the just cause and aspirations of the Armenian people. These same people may be behind hyperbolic assertions that Armenian Terrorism is a threat to U.S. security and (perhaps self-fulfilling) predictions that U.S. diplomats may fall victim to Armenian extremists.

In connection, it is worth noting that "studies" and "hearings" on Armenian terrorism (which our tax dollars presumably pay for) fail to point out an important and easily documented fact: that the intensification of Turkish intervention in Armenian efforts to commemorate their martyrs, for instance by building memorials to the 1915 victims (e.g. in Montebello, California) and of the Turkish Government's propaganda campaign of denial and distortion actually preceded by more than a decade the earliest acts attributed to organized Armenian terrorists (1975). Indeed, statements issued by such

groups made it clear that their initial actions were in direct response to such Turkish provocation, particularly the 1974 effort to censor a U.N. Human Rights Commission sub-committee report on Genocide which accurately described the Armenian massacres as "the first genocide of the Twentieth century." Secretary Shultz, if the limited acts of a few individuals or small groups outraged by Turkish denials and avoidance of responsibility is "terrorism" (which it is), what word can possibly describe the present Turkish Government's cover-up 1.5 million murders, refusal to deal openly with its problems, or its harassment and intimidation of the survivors and their descendents, even in the U.S.?

In fact, in sharp contrast to modern Germany's atonement and its behavior toward the Jews and Israel, today's Turkey honors the memory of the arch-criminal Talaat Pasha with a monument, memorials, and the like. What would be the reaction of world Jewry or of others if present-day Germany so honored Hitler, denied the Holocaust, and committed other such crimes which Turkey commits today against its Armenian victims?

In summary, whether Armenian terrorists "use" the fact of Genocide to "justify in part" their actions does not justify the U.S. government ignoring the overwhelming historical evidence, unashamedly labeling it "ambiguous", and describing the planned and brutal murders of 1.5 million men, women and children as an "allegation".

If the intent of taking such an indefensible position, one so embarrassing to the credibility of the U.S., is to discourage

terrorism, the record shows that the opposite is true. If the intent is simply to placate the Turks for strategic reasons (NATO, etc.), becoming a willing accomplice in the cover-up of mass murder is too much to ask American citizens to accept as the price of Turkish blackmail.

We need not recite the record once more. The fact is that the Genocide of 1915 occurred. The events as well as the motivation and nature of those events are documented by a large number of non-Armenian and non-Turkish eyewitnesses and on-the-scene observers have provided us with a very reliable record. These include U.S. Ambassador Morgenthau, whose reports and later writings were based on U.S. consular dispatches. The U.S. archives themselves also provide extensive documentation. League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Nansen, the German Dr. Lepsius, Herbert A. Gibbons, Arnold Toynbee, Winston Churchill, and many others of that period also described the horrors of the Turkish Genocide of the Armenians.

Present-day experts on the Holocaust and on Genocide (Horowitz, Fein, Sachar, etc.) recognize the genocidal intent and nature of the Armenian massacres of 1915 and regard it as "the prototype of twentieth century genocide." As we have noted, President Reagan and virtually all U.S. presidents have spoken of the Armenian Genocide, and within the past decade, a U.S. House of Representatives adopted HJR 148 the honoring the 1915 Armenian victims of Genocide.

This is the first time, to our knowledge, that someone speaking on behalf of the U.S. Department of State has actually

taken the official position that the Genocide of 1.5 million Armenians did not occur.

However, having taken such a stand (or by allowing a statement to that effect to be published), the Department is obligated to go beyond a mechanical retraction. We expect, at the least, both a retraction and a clear, unequivocal statement acknowledging the Armenian Genocide as a historical fact, i.e. to fully correct the official record as reflected in the August "Note." The retraction should at least appear in the State Department Bulletin, as did the "Note". An affirmation of the historic facts - to counter the damage done by the "Note" - could be in the form of a statement by you, as Secretary, or by the President, and might also appear in the Bulletin.

As Americans, we are concerned that this total reversal and rejection of America's historic (past) role as a champion of the Armenian people and its rights will further strengthen the more recent perception of America as blindly pro-Turkish and indifferent to Armenian concerns, thereby pushing the world's six to seven million strategically-located Armenians further away from their traditional western orientation.

Finally and most important for all of our fellow Americans to recognize is that forces in the State Department and or the Defense Department may have succeeded in using misrepresentations and distorted notions of "national security" to in fact subordinate American interests to the whims of the Turkish military junta, for certainly America itself has nothing to gain from denying the Armenian Genocide.

Instead of joining Turkey in her psychopathic denial, American officials could serve the interests of the U.S. and its Turkish "ally" better by encouraging Turkey to face reality as the U.S. has done.

Affirmative action, for instance, is an implicit recognition of guilt arising from American enslavement of blacks and subsequent Jim Crow laws. Also, a special governmental commission has held hearings and is now recommending compensation for Japanese Americans interned is one of the darkest pages of our history.

Native Americans (Indians) are having their lands restored receiving compensation (reparations), and having old treaty rights recognized through American courts.

Americans have not hidden from the moral responsibilities inherent in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or in crimes committed by American soldiers against Vietnamese civilians. Our history or sociology books do not ignore such episodes in American history as the Oriental Exclusion Acts, lynchings and other expressions of racism, anti-Catholic or anti-Irish riots, anti-Semitism, restrictive housing covenants (aimed at Armenians as well as blacks and Jews), and other such distasteful but very real chapters in our continuing evolution toward the still-to-be-realized ideal.

It would seem that the American example of acknowledging and coming to grips with the past and attempting to compensate for or correct it - should be shared with Turkish officials. Instead, it appears that American officials may have allowed themselves to

be drawn into a preposterous but ugly, and clearly counterproductive uniquely Turkish denial of reality. (The same Turkish junta denies the very existence of some eight million Kurds in Turkey and to enforce this denial, considers it a crime to speak Kurdish, use Kurdish names, or even to say "I am a Kurd.")

Finally, a word should be said on the human cost of the State Department's denial. Any review of the eyewitness accounts in the official British "Blue Book" on the 1915 massacres or in the many other sources of such accounts would help Department officials to understand the horrors and brutalities to which our parents and grandparents were subjected and thereby, appreciate how painful the Department "Note" was to us as descendants and how particularly devastating it was to those elderly persons who are actually survivors of the Armenian holocaust. They call us, write to us, or stop us on the street and ask: "Do they think I imagined all of that? Were my parents not beheaded in front of me? Was I not left in the desert to die? And what of my scars?" How shall we answer them, Mr. Secretary?

Viewed in terms of international morality, the seriousness of this denial cannot be overstated. It must not only be corrected fully and clearly, without equivocation, but those harmed by it - harmed in terms of mental anguish and perhaps worse - deserve an apology that recognizes the seriousness of such insensitivity to the unprecedented human suffering which they and their parents or grandparents had experienced.

Mr. Secretary, whatever the State Department may or may not say about it, the Armenian Genocide is a fact. But, as Americans, we must insist that the Department reverse its untenable and callous denial of 1.5 million murders for the sake of historic truth and for the sake of America's integrity and genuine national interests.

We await your action and your written response and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you directly.

Sincerely yours,

ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE
EASTERN UNITED STATES

LEO SARKISIAN

Leo Sarkisian,
Public Information

JW
Enclosure

* Please Address Response to: Aram Kailian, Chairman at the address above.

16

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: SELECTED STATEMENTS

— Quotes from non-Armenian observers and experts on "the first genocide of the twentieth century", in which over one and a half million Armenians were systematically annihilated by the Turks (1915-1917) —

"By any standards this was surely the most unprecedented, indeed the most unimaginable racial annihilation, until then, in modern history. Nevertheless, apparently unconcerned by the enormity of their affront to civilization, the members of the Young Turk regime continued to view the 'deportations' as nothing more than effective diplomacy, the realization of Abdul Hamid's injunction that 'the best way to finish with the Armenian Question is to finish with the Armenians'."

Howard M. Sachar
Emergence of the Middle East 1914-1924
(Knopf, 1969)

"From May until October the Ottoman Government pursued methodically a plan of extermination far more hellish than the worst possible massacre. Orders for deportation of the entire Armenian population to Mesopotamia were despatched to every province of Asia Minor. These orders were explicit and detailed. No hamlet was too insignificant to be missed. The news was given by town criers that every Armenian was to be ready to leave at a certain hour for an unknown destination. There were no exceptions for the aged, the ill, the women in pregnancy."

Dr. Herbert A. Gibbons,
The Blackest Page of Modern History
(Putnam, New York 1916)

"In 1915 there occurred a 'final solution' which is now almost forgotten, the deliberate extermination of the Armenians by the Turks. The Armenian 'problem' was solved by the massacre or deportation of some 1,750,000 men, women and children from the Armenian provinces of Turkey. Over a million died or disappeared through massacres in Turkey or during the forced marches to the deserts of the Turkish eastern territories—the areas which were later to become Syria and Iraq."

Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel,
The Incomparable Crime
(Putman 1967)

"A foreign witness has said that these deportation columns were merely a polite form of massacre, but in reality they were infinitely worse and more heartless; for instead of instant death they forced the victims to undergo all sorts of inhuman sufferings, while this cowardly and barbarous plan was to save the face of the authorities by posing as a necessary military measure. From June till August 1915, the hottest time of year when the victims were most likely to succumb, these processions of death wended their way endlessly from all the vilayets and towns where there were Armenians southwards in the direction of the desert."

Fridtjof Nansen
(High Commissioner for Refugees, League of Nations)
Armenia and the Near East
(New York 1928)

"The atrociousness of the two great twentieth century wars was aggravated by 'genocide' (i.e. the wholesale extermination of civilian populations). In the First World War the Turks committed genocide against the Armenians; in the Second World War, the Germans committed genocide against the Jews."

Arnold J. Toynbee,
Mankind and Mother Earth, Oxford
(University Press, NY/London, 1976)

"When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact."

"I have by no means told the most terrible details, for a complete narration of the sadistic orgies of which these Armenian men and women were the victims can never be printed in an American publication. Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people. I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915."

Henry Morgenthau
(U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, 1913-1916)
Ambassador Morgenthau's Story
(Doubleday, Garden City 1918)

"It was left to the civilized twentieth century to invent the word 'genocide' to identify the action that seeks systematically to destroy a whole people. The Turks, early in the century, were its first practitioners; the Nazis in mid-century gave it a horrible extension that eclipsed the earlier record."

"The Turkish victims numbered more than a million and a half Armenians, a gentle, highly cultured, industrious people who, in 1915, behind the facade of war, were methodically done to death."

"The Reaction of the West to Genocide" in
Abram L. Sachar, *The Course of Our Times*,
(Knopf, N.Y., 1972)

"The victims of Twentieth-century premeditated genocide—the Jews, the Gypsies, the Armenians—were murdered in order to fulfill the state's design for a new order".

"War was used in both cases to transform the nation to correspond to the ruling elite's formula by eliminating groups conceived of as alien, enemies by definition."

Helen Fein
Accounting for Genocide
(Victims and Survivors of the Holocaust)
(Free Press/Macmillan, N.Y., 1979)

ARMENIANS



ARMENIANS REMEMBER...

APRIL 24, 1915

COMMEMORATION
OF A
GENOCIDE

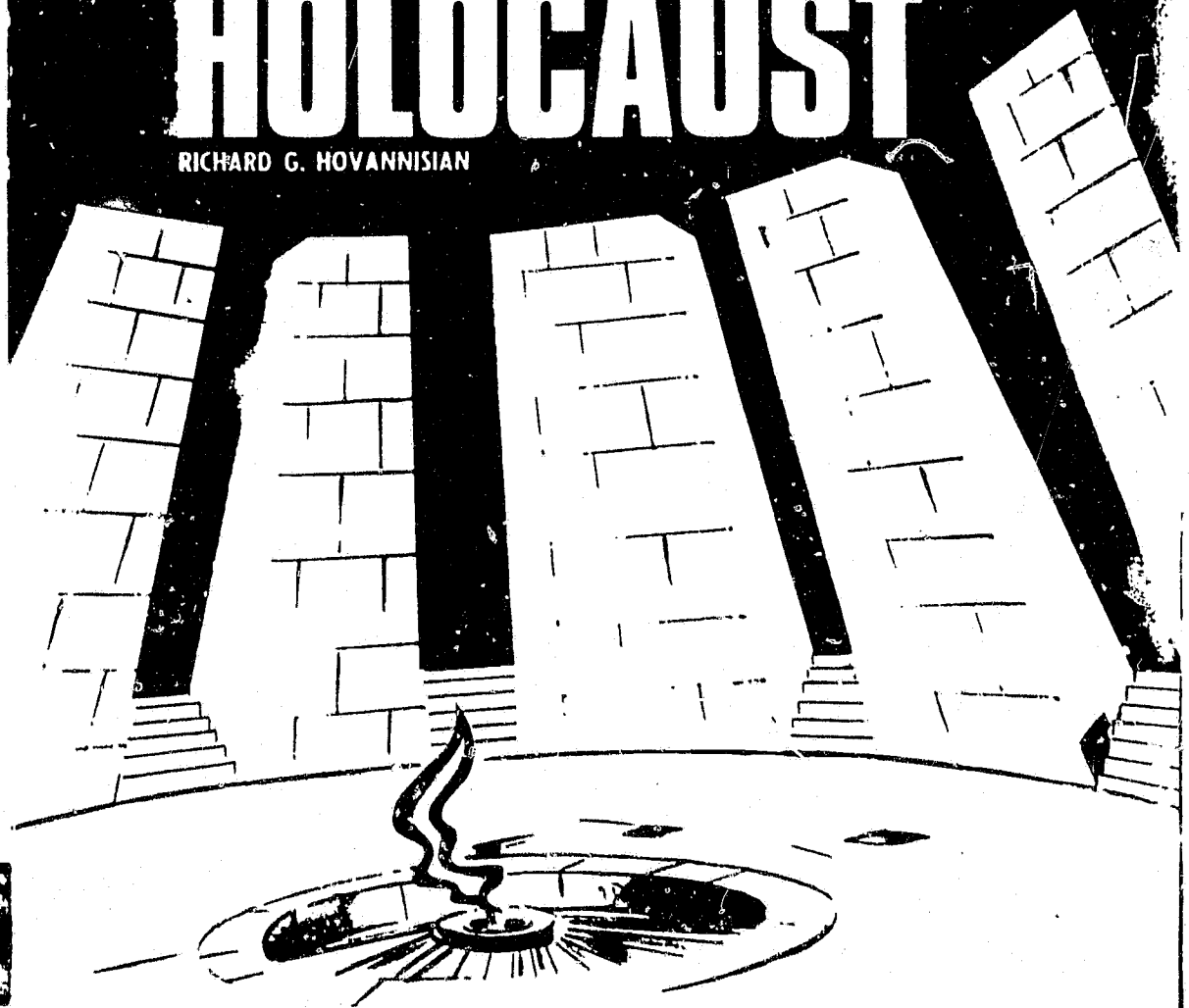


ARMENIANS

THE ARMENIAN HOLOCAUST

A Bibliography Relating to the
Departations, Massacres, and Dispersion
of the Armenian People, 1915-1923

RICHARD G. HOVANNISIAN



ARMENIAN HERITAGE PRESS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES AND RESEARCH
Cambridge, Massachusetts



about
the

**Turkish
Planned Genocide**

of
1915

from the

The New-York Times

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